



DID YOU KNOW?

When imaging is done unnecessarily, it not only is subject to out-of-pocket expenses for you, possible side-effects, and **can actually prolong a person's recovery?**

Studies have shown patients with no back pain often present with "abnormalities" on imaging that are **normal and expected** for their age. For example, many healthy adults have a finding called "degenerative disc disease". Often, that normal condition is not what is causing the pain! Labeling a patient with this finding can worsen a patient's sense of well-being and cause them to become inactive- which can cause the pain to continue for long periods of time. For more information regarding the relationship between body and mind, check out our resource for the cognitive behavioral approach to acute pain by clicking or scanning the QR code below.

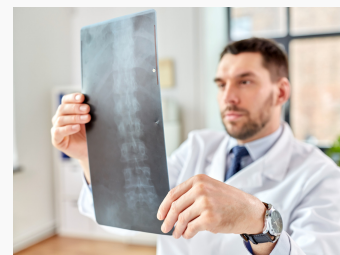


WHAT TESTS DO I NEED FOR MY LOW BACK PAIN?

The short answer - probably none! Most adults are likely to experience acute low back pain at some point during their lifetime, some data suggests the rate is as high as 80%! When people are experiencing severe pain, it can be easy to assume the worst. However, it is important to know that **most cases of back pain are not caused by anything serious and will usually go away on its own or with simple treatment.**

Imaging is not without risk. X-rays and CT scans expose you to radiation, and MRI tests can be very costly. **Your health care provider will complete an exam and determine if imaging is necessary at that visit.** They might order tests based on certain symptoms, your age and health history, or the circumstances of your back pain such as being involved in an accident or a substantial fall. It is important to talk with your health care provider so they can effectively learn about your pain, and so that **you** are comfortable with the treatment plan. **Your doctor's decision to wait for imaging is not related to how much pain you are experiencing - your pain is real regardless of what is seen on an x-ray - and often the source of the pain is not able to be identified with imaging..**

Often, imaging is not recommended until 4-6 weeks after the pain starts. By this time, if you remain active, you should be starting to feel an improvement in your symptoms.



Your primary source of information about managing your back pain should be your health care provider, and decisions should be made between the two of you. The information shared here does not replace their advice and guidance. Please consult your low back pain care provider before changing your normal activity or exercise routine.